

# Maersk Brokers Nimble deal **for faster storage**

Over the course of 100 years, Maersk Broker has grown into a top ten worldwide ship brokering organisation.

Still a family-owned company and headquartered in Denmark, Maersk Broker has 17 offices across 15 countries employing 275 brokers. It provides sale, purchase and chartering broker services for a range of markets, covering container vessels, tankers and bulk carriers, as well as offering financial services and recycling.

Maersk Broker is a rapidly developing business and as with many organisations today, pressures on data storage and access to applications tend to dominate IT department resources. An HP Enterprise Virtual Array had been sitting at the heart of the company's network for three and a half years but, according to IT manager Bo Steen Nyegaard, it was time for a change.

"There were limitations," says Bo Steen Nyegaard. "Besides a lack of free disk space and the inability to upgrade easily, there was a performance issue. We were only getting around 15,000 IOPS. It wasn't enough as the

lack of speed was being felt across the company when trying to access and run critical applications. A faster storage solution was definitely needed."

The company runs a virtualised infrastructure using Microsoft's Hyper-V server and Citrix XenServer but also a virtual Exchange server and physical SQL servers. Danish reseller Adaptive advised Bo Steen Nyegaard to look at changing the storage solution to help speed up the whole environment. The current array was proving to be a bottleneck.

### Need for speed

"We were three years into a five year support contract with HP so we were not really planning on changing the storage," adds Bo Steen Nyegaard. "But on Brian Fuchs advice at Adaptive we decided to trial Nimble Storage. It was immediately clear that we had to change."

He says the trial was a huge success and negated the need to look at any other storage options.

Adaptive were optimizing the infrastructure and the Nimble array was installed as the key storage device on which the virtual infrastructure would run.

"The IOPS, data compression and security features were key reasons why we chose Nimble," adds Bo Steen Nyegaard.

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**"Nimble CS500 is delivering 90,000 IOPS and very low latency which has made a significant improvement on our IT and end-user experience."**

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Critical applications such as SoftCOM Mail, were also now running 4 times faster than previously and vast improvements were also seen in Hyper-V.

Given Nimble's patented CASL architecture, the workloads generated by Microsoft virtualisation and SQL server can run on the same 3U array with no performance or latency issues, whilst reducing storage administration and support time within the IT department.

This has also been a key benefit for Maersk Broker as, by Bo Steen Nyegaard's own admission, it has a relatively small IT team of six. He says that Nimble's support has been "invaluable to us" especially as he admits, "we only have few storage qualifications and capability in-house."

There were also physical space savings with the Nimble solution, which have both a cost and sustainability benefit. The HP EVA 8100 (36U) and EVA P6300 (22U) used a total of 58U. This was replaced with a single Nimble Storage CS500 (3U).

Power footprint was also a key issue as Maersk Broker needed to move the equipment to a hosting centre. Its power usage went from around 6000 watts down to 600 watts, which gave the company significant savings.

### Cost-effective future proofing

The Nimble architecture can be scaled selectively and non-disruptively, which will enable Maersk Broker to boost capacity or performance when needed – there is no need to over-provision. Bo Steen Nyegaard claims that this flexibility minimises risk, which is essential for a growing business.

"Hardware investment is a big capital cost and hits our budget, so it is not something we want to do very often. When we do spend money buying new equipment, we want to ensure it has the ability for expansion for the coming years. With Nimble, not only does data compression reduce our initial investment, we also know that we can scale to meet future demands, whatever they might be."

Nimble's ability to scale storage to fit specific requirements has freed up the IT team to now focus on its business applications and industry-specific solutions, safe in the knowledge that it now has the infrastructure to cope and expand.

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**"Our next challenge in Maersk Broker is not hardware related at all. Given the fact we have plenty of capacity and performance, we can now focus on business applications and solutions. It's been a painless process to get here, from trial and acquisition through to installation and migration and now we can really concentrate on fine tuning the network."**

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